



## Autopsy of Forensic Communication Messages Letter Mutilation Perpetrators

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**Abstract.** This study analyzes forensic communication messages in letters written by mutilators, a case that has caused widespread concern in the community, especially Yogyakarta in 2023. The background of this study is the increasing use of written communication in criminal acts, which, until now, is not a specific method, so it requires a new analytical approach to understand the motives and intentions of the perpetrators. The formulation of the problem raised is how forensic communication message autopsy can reveal the hidden meaning and psychological context of the message conveyed by the perpetrator in the letter. The research method used is qualitative with a *Hermeneutics of Suspicious* approach to reveal hidden meanings in texts, behaviors, or social phenomena. The results of this study show that the message in the letter does not contain manipulative elements, regret, and symbolism are explained as the psychological condition of the perpetrator. The research results also reveal communication patterns that show a lack of planning. The conclusion of this study highlights the importance of forensic communication analysis in helping law enforcement understand the context and ethical motivations behind criminal acts. These findings have significant implications for the development of forensic communication message autopsy methods that are more effective in handling similar cases in the future.

**Keywords:** Autopsi Pesan, Komunikasi Forensik, Mutilasi, Analisis Wacana, Psikologi Forensik.

### INTRODUCTION

What comes to your mind when you read the news about 65 pieces of the human body? This research focuses on the mutilation case involving the defendant Heru Prastyo and the victim Ayu Indraswari which occurred on Sunday, March 19, 2023, at Wisma Anggun 2, Sleman, Yogyakarta. This tragic incident stole the public's attention because of its very brutal and horrific nature. The motive behind this crime was revealed as the defendant's attempt to confiscate the victim's property, which then led to murder and mutilation. The main reason for this study is the lack of scientific research methods that focus on analyzing the message of forensic evidence, so that the results of this study can be used as forensic evidence to consider the judge's decision. Therefore, this study seeks to answer the question: "How can the autopsy of forensic communication messages on the criminal's letter be interpreted to uncover the construction of the motive and intention behind the act of mutilation?"

From several literature reviews conducted, it shows that forensic communication has evolved along with the advancement of communication technology. Studies such as Stephan A. Schwartz (2024), Saule A. Mussabekova, Xeniya E. Mkhitarian, Khamida R. Abdikadirova (2024), Evanthia Sakellari, Mari Berglund, Areti Lagiou, Maria Luisa Sotto-mayor De Carvalho Pinto, Maria Anabela Ferreira Dos Santos, Mari Lahti, Tiina Murto (2024) only highlight individual and social risk factors that influence the experience of violence in the context of children's forensic communication (Barradas et al., 2019). However, from all the literature reviewed, there is still a gap related to a comprehensive and interdisciplinary analytical approach, thus there is a gap in research, namely the absence of a special method to reveal the motive of the crime using forensic

communication message autopsy. Therefore, we want to contribute by combining communication theory, criminology, forensic psychology, and discourse analysis to provide a deeper understanding and different nuances in the world of communication (Spranger, 2022).

**TABLE 1.** Crime Statistics in Yogyakarta,  
Source; BPS Yogyakarta

Jenis Kasus Number of Crime	Tahun/ Year		
	2021	2022	2023
Jumlah Kejahatan/ <i>Crime Total</i>	5 331	5 166	5 193
Jumlah Kejahatan terselesaikan/ <i>Crime Cleared</i>	3 471	3 494	2 617
Persentase Kejahatan terselesaikan/ <i>Percentage Crime Cleared</i>	65	68	50
Kerugian/Material Damage (juta Rupiah/million rupiahs)			
a. Kerugian Material/ <i>Material Damage</i>	132 693	666 292	1 753 855
b. Kerugian Ditemukan Kembali/ <i>Restitution</i>	99 370	14 789	...

Sumber/ Source: POLDA D.I Yogyakarta/ *Regional Police of D.I Yogyakarta*

The purpose of our research is to develop a method of analyzing the autopsy of messages that can identify and interpret the communication elements in the letter of the mutilator. This research also aims to uncover communication patterns that can show the hidden planning and intentions of the perpetrators. We dig up data using a qualitative method with a *hermeneutics of suspicious* approach to explore the structure, language, and symbolism in the letter. This approach allows researchers to identify whether there are manipulative and symbolic elements that reflect the psychological state of the perpetrator. We hope that the contribution of this research can provide new insights in the field of communication to assist law enforcement in understanding the context and motivation behind criminal acts. The findings of this study can also be used for the development of more effective forensic analysis methods in dealing with other crimes in the future. Thus, this research not only contributes to the development of forensic communication theory but also provides practical implications for law enforcement and criminal analysis (Lennard, 2013).

## METHODS

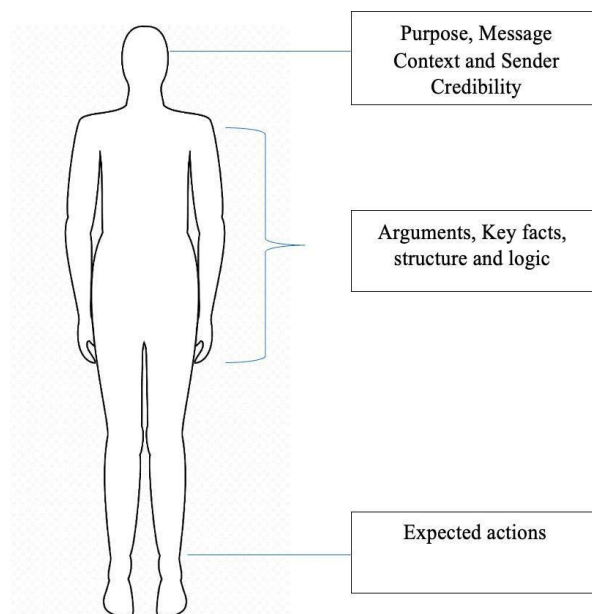
The method we use is qualitative with the *Hermeneutics of Suspicious* approach, the main reason we use this approach is that the object of our research is a letter whose content is a text that can only be detected using Hermeneutics of Suspicious. The objectives of using this approach are; **Uncovering Hidden Motives:** The hermeneutics of suspicion allows us to dig into the messages behind the surface of the text to find hidden motives or intentions that are not immediately apparent. **Critical Analysis of Ideology and Power:** This approach helps identify how ideology and power can affect the way messages are constructed and delivered. In a legal context, this could mean understanding how *bias* or prejudice can affect evidence or testimony. **Contextualization of Evidence:** The hermeneutics of suspicion emphasizes the importance of understanding the context in which the text or message is created. It will help in assessing the validity and relevance

of evidence in a legal case by considering relevant social, cultural, and psychological factors. **Overcoming Ambiguity:** In many cases of crime, the text or message can be ambiguous or have a double meaning. The hermeneutics approach of suspicion allows us to navigate ambiguity and achieve a clearer understanding of the intent of the perpetrator. **Validation and Verification:** By digging deeper into the text, the hermeneutic of suspicion can assist in validating or verifying the authenticity and accuracy of evidence. This is important in ensuring that the evidence used in the legal process is valid and reliable.

**TABLE 2.** Steps to Perform the Hermeneutics of Suspicious Method Source; (Kerbacher et al., 2020)

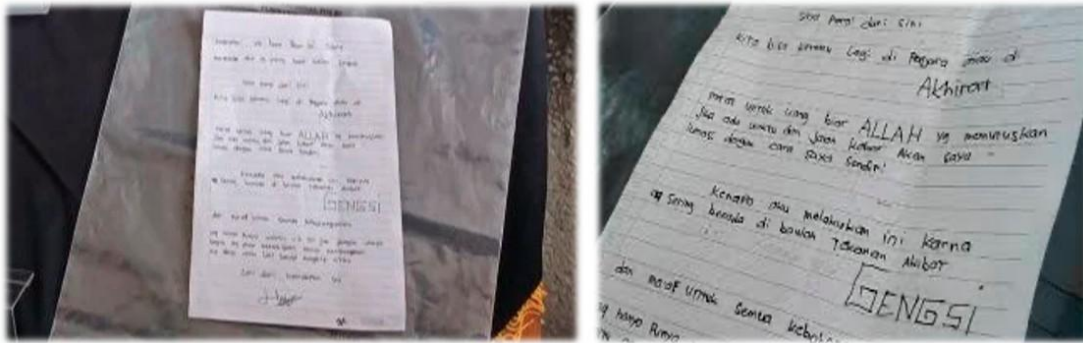
Research Steps	Description
Text Selection	Select and ensure the authenticity of the mutilator's letter.
Pre-understanding	Collecting case context information and perpetrator profiles.
Text Deconstruction	Analyzing the structure of language and rhetoric in letters
Identify the Motive	Using the hermeneutics of suspicion to uncover hidden motives.
Contextual Analysis	Linking findings to social, psychological, and legal contexts
Interpretation and understanding	Make a synthesis of the overall meaning of the letter.
Validation of Findings	Comparing findings with literature and similar cases.

The image below is a mechanism or structure that we created to explain the process or how forensic communication message autopsy works.



**FIGURE 1.** Message Autopsy Structure Source; Researchers

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION



**FIGURE 2.** Heru's Letter Source; Yogyakarta Regional Police

*Siapapun yg baca pesan ini tolong ma'afkan aku yg sering buat kalian jengkel. Saya pergi dari sini. Kita bisa ketemu lagi di penjara atau di AKHIRAT. Ma'af untuk uang biar ALLAH yg memutuskan jika ada waktu dan jalan keluar akan saya lunasi dengan cara saya sendiri. Kenapa aku melakukan ini karna aq sering berada di bawah tekanan akibat GENGSI, dan maaf untuk semua kebohonganku, aq hanya punya waktu - + 24 jam dengan waktu segitu aq akan memutuskan untuk menyerahkan ke polisi atau lari sebisa mungkin atau lari dari kehidupan ini. Salam buat keluargaku dirumah dan tolong sampaikan aq telah gagal mendengarkan nasihat kedua orang tuaku, Masih ada wiwit (adikku) yg bisa kalian nasihati jangan sampai seperti saya, Semoga kita bisa bertemu kembali.*

The following are the results of the qualitative coding, we group them into several categories; apologies, social pressure, life decisions, messages for family, intentions and motives of crime, internal conflicts.

**TABLE 3. Coding and Categorization Source; Researchers**

Qualitative Category Coding	Description; context, text, social and psychology	Mesaage
Apology	Expressions of regret and apology to people who have been hurt.	Anyone who reads this message, please forgive me for often irritating you.
Social Pressure	Describes the pressure felt due to social demands or prestige.	The reason why I do this is because I am often under pressure due to PRESTIGE.
Life Decision	Uncertainty about the next steps to take.	I only have time - + 24 hours with that time I will decide to hand over to the police or run away as much as possible or run away from this life
Message for Families	A special message for the family, showing love and regret.	Greetings to my family at home and please tell me that I have failed to listen to the advice of my parents, there is still a wiwit (my sister) that you can advise not to be like me

Intention and Construction of Motifs	Revealing the intention or motive behind the action taken	Sorry for the money, let Allah decide if there is time and a way out, I will pay it off in my own way.
Internal Conflict	Indicates that there is a contradiction in oneself regarding the action to be taken.	I left from here. We can meet again in prison or in the Hereafter.

Consciousness is not something given but a task of the human being to find a detailed analysis of what Ricoeur sees as an offer to the dilemma posed by the multitude of possibilities about what to do, he moves to assume that there is meaning to be found (Beaudry et al., 2024). The content of the Heru letter is a method to work systematically discovering the tension it generates by personality analysis, the dialectic created emerges from personal morality with ideas that transcend the limits of humanity (Mathews et al., 2024). Example; Heru's apology as a perpetrator of a crime is considered a form of remorse that puts guilt in a major position, whereas Ricoeur's hermeneutics focuses more on the distinctive instinct<sup>1</sup> to read the situation as the main factor driving the crime (Gómez-Quintero et al., 2024) We consider this apology to be something sublime<sup>2</sup> that happened in Heru, the rest, Heru used the principle of humanity as a capacity to bring about chaos of instinctive impulses<sup>3</sup>.

Our coding results above show how important it is to understand the context demands that Ricoeur places on the text, which we read as a suggestion to direct research on the act of mutilation as text that can be read as hidden messages. The contents of the letter navigate us to take full responsibility for what hidden messages the perpetrator presents. Communication patterns that may be seen are; There is a dialectical relationship between the perpetrator's message to the family as a sense of remorse, meaning that there is a *nomena*<sup>4</sup> energy that explains that the perpetrator did not have a murder plan. Spontaneity as the main postulate explores the extent to which crime is committed as a symbol of the wild thinking of the introverted person, at least we have two conflicting meanings; defilement of behavior as a symbolic representation of sin and the meaning of communication from the perpetrator (Harley et al., 2024).

We found out how the symbolic meaning in the letter could deceive the investigators' conscious mind sensors so that this forensic evidence was not presented in the trial. Until August 30, 2023, Heru was sentenced to death by the Sleman District Court in Yogyakarta. In essence, the construction of the motif that Heru built through the letter has a new and creative meaning, this message goes beyond the rules of metaphor and the use of narrative in general.

**TABLE 4. Language Structure and Hermeneutics of Suspicious Source; Researchers**

Structure of Language Used by Criminals	I mean, Hermeneutic
Prison	Morals, <b>Ideologies and Narratives about Crime</b> : The concept of prison also reflects how society defines crime and lawlessness. In this context, we can suspect that the crime and punishment narratives applied reflect the interests of the dominant group more than objective justice. Who is detained, how they are treated, and what types of crimes are considered worthy of imprisonment could reflect social bias or structural injustice.



Afterlife	<p>The concept of the afterlife is often used in religion to encourage moral obedience in this world with the promise of reward or the threat of punishment in the afterlife. Through the lens of the hermeneutics of suspicious, we can analyze the afterlife as a social control mechanism used by religious or political authorities to maintain the social and moral order.</p> <p>By instilling fear of punishment in the afterlife, these institutions can direct individual behavior according to the values they consider important.</p>
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<sup>1</sup> Distinctive instinct is a concept that is often associated with the idea of behaviors that arise naturally or automatically in response to certain stimuli, and these behaviors distinguish one species or individual from another.

<sup>2</sup> Something subtle, happens after several events that enter the human body

<sup>3</sup> Heru is in debt for online loans of 8 million

<sup>4</sup> A philosophical concept that refers to the "thing in itself" or the reality of an object as it is, regardless of how it appears in human perception or experience. This concept is mainly related to the philosopher Immanuel Kant in his work entitled *Critique of Pure Reason*.

Prisons are not only a place of physical detention but also a tool of power that the state or authorities use to control society. Philosophers such as Michel Foucault argue that prisons are part of a "disciplinary mechanism" designed to monitor, control, and shape individual behavior (Hoffmann, 2023).

Hermeneutically, the perpetrator has no intention of committing a crime, we build this argument based on the results of the analysis above (see table 4) which shows that the deepest condition of the perpetrator regrets committing murder, but the legal mechanism in Indonesia refers to article 340 of the Criminal Procedure Code "Whoever deliberately and with a plan first takes the life of another person, is threatened for premeditated murder, with the death penalty or life imprisonment or for a certain period of time, a maximum of twenty years," this statement is supported by evidence found at the murder scene.

**TABLE 5.** Evidence of Crime Source; Court Decision

Evidence Found at the Murder Site	Sum
Smartwatch Watches	2
Brown Leather Wallet	1
Condom	1
Black Bayonet	1

That means that Heru's id, ego and super ego conditions clash with article 340 of the Criminal Code and the judge's death sentence. Heru's id, ego and superego reflect a deep sense of remorse while article 340 explains the consequences of a person committing premeditated murder. We draw conclusions; we agree to the separation of contexts but the Judge should consider this as a logical consequence that must be accepted, the Judge should consider the contents of the letter as forensic evidence. Until the verdict was handed down, Heru's letter was not used as forensic evidence. In fact, every evidence found in the field can be used as a clue in accordance with article 184 of the Criminal Procedure Code (Butler, 2017). Even though in the end he will still be sentenced to death, at least legal justice occurs in the courtroom, law is not only about the law, but about social justice (Liu et al., 2022).

*Dear Boss,*  
*I kept hearing the police had arrested me but they hadn't been able to cure me yet. I laugh when they look so smart and talk about being on the right track. That joke about the Skin Apron made me fit perfectly. I'm in love with a whore and I won't stop ripping her until I'm completely tired. Great job, the last job is. I didn't give the woman time to scream.*  
*How could they arrest me now. I love my job and want to start again. You'll soon hear about me with my cute little game. I kept some red stuff in a ginger beer bottle on my last job to write but it got thick like glue and I couldn't use it. The red ink is quite right, hopefully ha ha. The next job I do, I'm going to cut off the woman's ears and send them to the police officers just for fun, right. Save this letter again until I do more work, then give it in person.*  
*My knife is so good and sharp that I want to get to work immediately if I get the chance. Good luck.*  
*Our greetings and regards Jack si Ripper*  
*Don't worry I give you the name of the trade. Not good enough to post this before the red ink is gone. Just a curse. It has not been successful. They say I'm a doctor now. haha"*

**FIGURE 3.** The content of the "Dear Boss" letter  
 Source; Google

**TABLE 6.** The content of the "Dear Boss" letter  
 Source; Google

Categories Qualitative Coding	Description; context, text, social and Psychology	Message
Mocking Tone	The author mocks the efforts of the police who have not succeeded in arresting him, showing a dismissive attitude.	"I kept hearing the police had arrested me but they hadn't been able to cure me yet. I laugh when they look so smart and talk about being on the right track."
Self-Identification	The use of the name "Jack the Ripper" to create a terrifying and mysterious identity.	"Our greetings and respects, Jack the Ripper."
Description of Violence	The author describes acts of violence in horrific detail and plans for the future	"I'm in love with a whore and I'm not going to stop ripping her until I'm really tired."
Manipulation and Threats	The author threatened to send the victim's body parts to the police as a mockery.	"The next job I do, I'm going to cut off the woman's ear and send it to the police officer just for fun, isn't it."
Language and Symbolism	The use of terrible symbolism to add dramatic effect.	"I kept some red objects in a ginger beer bottle at my last job to write but they became thick like glue and I couldn't use them."
Hidden Motives/Intentions	Expressing an intention to continue the murder and enjoy the act.	I love my job and want to start again. You'll hear about me soon with my cute little game.

After we have analyzed and compared the two letters in the same case, namely murder, then you can see the comparison of the two in the table below

**TABLE 7.** Comparison of Heru's Letter and "Dear Boss"  
Source; Researchers

Category; Context, text, social and Psychology	Surat "Dear Boss"	Heru's Letter
Tone and Attitude	Mocking and belittling the police, showing a superior attitude and not caring about authority.	Humble and apologize, show guilt and remorse for the actions that have been taken.
Self-Identification	Using the name "Jack the Ripper" to create a terrifying and mysterious persona, as well as highlighting his identity as an unreachable perpetrator.	There is no prominent self-identification, focusing more on expressions of regret and apologies to those closest to them.
Description of the Action	Depict acts of violence in horrific detail, as well as threats to continue the murder.	There are no descriptions of violent acts, focusing more on social pressures and life decisions to be taken
Hidden Motives and Intentions	Declaring an intention to continue the murder and enjoy the act, indicates a complex psychological condition.	Revealing social pressure and prestige as factors that drive action, as well as the intention to improve the situation in one's own way.
Manipulation and Threats	Threatening to send the victim's body parts to the police as a mockery, indicates a high degree of emotional manipulation.	There is no immediate threat, but it indicates internal conflict and uncertainty about the future, as well as the possibility of surrendering or ending life.
Language and Symbolism	It uses horrific symbolism, such as blood in a ginger beer bottle, to add a dramatic and terrifying effect.	Use more emotional and introspective language, focusing on apologies and regrets, as well as relationships with family.
Social and Cultural Context	Showing indifference to social and legal norms, as well as creating a self-image as an actor who is beyond the reach of the law.	Demonstrate perceived social and cultural pressure, as well as a hope for forgiveness and understanding from those closest to them.

## CONCLUSIONS

The two letters above reveal fundamental differences in tone, motives, and social context. The "dear boss" letter was written in a mocking and dismissive tone, showing a superior attitude and indifference to authority. The author of this letter, who claims to be Jack the Ripper, uses this identity to create a terrifying and mysterious persona, aiming to challenge authority and add to the public's fears. Graphic descriptions of acts of violence and threats to proceed with the murder indicate a complex and possibly pathological psychological condition. In the context of the hermeneutics of suspicion, this letter can be seen as a manipulative attempt to mislead the investigation and highlight the identity as an unreachable perpetrator. In contrast, the message of the Heru letter shows a more introspective and condescending attitude, focusing on regret and apologies to those closest to them. The author reveals social pressure and prestige as the main factors driving



his actions, as well as pointing to internal conflicts and uncertainty about the future. There is no immediate threat in this message, but rather it shows a desire to make things right and get forgiveness. In hermeneutic analysis, this message reflects an effort to seek understanding and support from those closest to them, as well as express deep guilt and hope for reconciliation. This comparison reveals how the two messages, while different in tone and purpose, both show complex psychological and social dynamics. The "dear boss" letter focuses more on manipulation and threats, while the message of the heru letter focuses more on introspection and regret. The hermeneutics approach of suspicion helps uncover the motives and intentions hidden in these two messages, providing insight into the author's psychological and social conditions and their implications in legal and social contexts. Thus, this analysis not only uncovers the surface meaning of the messages, but also delves deeper to understand the broader context and motives behind the words written.

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